

## Only Christianity Is True, Part 3 - Romans 5:20-21 – December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011

- Today will be part three in a series titled; "Only Christianity Is True." I'm sensing that the Holy Spirit has really ministered powerfully in this study.
- The reason I say that is because of the feedback I've received over the last couple of weeks. It seems God has answered a lot of our questions.
- This is due to the Apostle Paul, bringing forth evidence proving this truth beyond any doubt, the first of which was submitted in verses 12-13.

### 1. It proves why I'm a sinner (Verses 12-13)

- The Apostle Paul demonstrates how all have sinned because sin and death entered the world vis-à-vis the first Adam, before the law was given.

### 2. It proves why I need the Savior (Verses 14)

- Paul ever so brilliantly connects the dots between Adam, and the second Adam to come; Jesus Christ the Savior would conquer sin and death.

### 3. It proves why salvation is a gift (Verses 15-16)

- Here, Paul ever so beautifully ties the bow of salvation around the gift of eternal life in that the trespass can't have the final word, the gift does.

### 4. It proves why Jesus is the only way (Verse 17-19)

- He says, just as Adam's disobedience brought condemnation, so too did Christ's obedience bring justification, and many were made righteous.

### 5. It proves why it is all by grace (Verse 20-21)

(20) The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, (21) so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- v20 Paul says that the law was added so that the trespass might increase, however, where sin did increase, grace then increased all the more.
- v21 He then says that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness bringing eternal life through Jesus our Lord.
- These two verses have been largely misunderstood, especially when it come to the law increasing, and sin with it so that grace increases more.

- Perhaps you'll bear with me as I take this out of the box and unwrap it, so to speak, because if the truth be known, there's a lot packed in this.
- First, it's vital we know what the law does NOT do namely, it does not make us sinners and it cannot make us righteous even if we could keep it.
- This then begs the question of what does the law do, if it can't do anything for me. Maybe better said, why even have the law in the first place?

- The shortest and simplest answer to this question is that the purpose of the law is to show me, me, and how that I have transgressed that law.
- There's a progression of sorts in that the law not only shows me that I'm a sinner, it also shows that as a sinner, I need the grace of the Savior.
- This is why Paul says, what he says; "the law was added so that sin might increase, and where sin increases, grace increases all the more."

- This is where the terrible misunderstanding comes in; we wrongly assume that we can keep on sinning because grace increases all the more.
- That is absolutely not what the passage is teaching, on the contrary, this increasing grace, in the face of increasing sin, teaches us not to sin.
- When I've been the recipient of God's amazing grace, when I should've been the recipient of God's blazing judgment, it teaches me to be godly.

**Titus 2:11-14 NIV** For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. (12) It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, (13) while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, (14) who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

- Not only does the grace of God teach me to be godly, so too does it purify me to be ready for Jesus Christ through Whom we have eternal life.
- OK, so how does this prove that only Christianity is true? Don't Islam and even other religions teach that one can have eternal life in paradise?
- Yes, but teaching it is not synonymous with proving it. Only Jesus has proved it! How? Only Jesus Christ lived a perfect and sinless life.

- Jesus not only lived a perfect and sinless life, only Jesus defeated death so grace might reign through His righteousness to bring eternal life.
- Now, here's what I'm thinking; if this is true, and it most certainly is true, then it would stand to reason that it is a level playing field for all sinners.
- Let me explain, when I come to the realization of this game changing truth I will see other people differently and I'll even see myself differently.

One commentator said it best when they wrote; "Paul's point is that the free grace of God experienced in Christ transfers us into a completely new humanity and that grace is actually more powerful than sin. Grace overflows much more than sin can spread. As one Puritan put it, 'There is more grace in Jesus than there is sin in me.'"

- It's for this reason it's the grace and kindness of God that leads us to repentance, not the wrath and judgment of God that leads to repentance.
- God's grace changes the complexion of my relationship with Him by making repentance and obedience a "get to" and not a "got to." I want to!
- Thirty years ago, in 1982, when I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ and was born again, the Lord took away the desire to live a sinful lifestyle.

Pastor Chuck Smith in his classic book; "Why Grace Changes Everything" wrote; "It's not that I can't do these things; I simply don't have the desire. The love of Christ constrains me to live a life that pleases Him. Having tasted the goodness of His love, I don't want to walk away from Him. I want to draw as close to Jesus as possible because I love Him and He loves me. I don't want to get involved in anything that would dishonor Him. Ironically, I live a much straighter life under grace than I ever did under the law. Under a legal relationship I am always pressing the limits. I am always trying to ascertain whether specific actions are right or wrong. I am always looking for loop-holes. I rationalize and justify the things I am doing. I live to the legal limits, plus a little bit more. God doesn't want to bind you with law; He wants to draw you to Himself with His love. ... So many of us fail to understand that love is the only true motivation for goodness. Fear is never a primary, driving force in the Christian life. If we are good only because we are afraid to be bad, that is not true righteousness. We can have circumspect external conduct as a cover for all kinds of wrong and twisted motivations. If fear of consequences is the only thing that keeps us in check, we may merely be an example of evil under restraint. That isn't true goodness. True goodness is always and exclusively motivated by love. If our moral choices are based on fervent love and a desire to abstain from things that grieve the heart of God, we have discovered the true motive of righteousness. ... This is the gospel of grace."